

**Don't Think PM, DPM's Frequent turun Padang Only Because Of Elections - Shafie Bernama
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SEMPORNA, Feb 5 (Bernama) -- Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal today reminded the party and Barisan Nasional component leaders and members that the prime minister and his deputy frequently going to the ground to meet the people is not only to bring the general election message.

Instead, he said, the frequent visits by Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is also BN chairman, and Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin of late were to tell everyone in Umno and other BN component parties to double their efforts to get close to the people and solve their problems.

"This is a very important agenda for BN's continued rule. There should not be any conflict among us. If there are differences, they should be set aside," he said at the closing of a character-building and progressive community leadership programme, here.

Shafie said party leaders and members should focus on the real opponents in the coming general election, the opposition, and on strengthening the election machinery and not inviting problems among the BN components.

"We must work harder and not bother whether the elections will be at the year-end or next year. The important thing is hard work and our solidarity as though the general election is tomorrow.

"Don't wait for it to be announced, then only we'll start to 'turun padang' (going to the ground) as it will already be too late," he said.

On Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) adviser Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim accusing the media of twisting his statement on Israel in an interview with The Wall Street Journal, he said it was up to Anwar to deny it.

Shafie said the BN government had no time for Anwar's antics as time was more important spent on efforts to develop the country and ensure the people's well-being.

"Without Anwar, the country will not go kaput. The people won't die without Anwar. There are many more capable leaders around who can contribute to the country's development," he said.

Shafie questioned Anwar on wanting to protect Israel but did not defend former Selangor state executive council member Datuk Dr Hasan Ali who was sacked from Pas.

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